Publishing or distributing this pamphlet in Greece is an act of treason.

The Crisis in the Balkans: The Macedonian Question and the Working Class

IN GREECE, exercising your right to free speech is a treasonous act.

That is what five members of *Organosi Sosialistiki Epanastasi*—the Greek sister organization of the ISO—learned when they published and sold this pamphlet.

Fifteen years in prison is the penalty the Greek government—backed by the U.S. and the European Community—wants to exact from anyone who defends the national rights of Macedonians. The Greek regime has for years oppressed Macedonians. Now, with civil war raging in the former Yugoslavia, the New Democracy regime is competing for a share in the carve-up of the Balkans. Its schemes depend on maintaining the fiction that Macedonia does not exist.

This pamphlet exposes the myths that bolster the regime's right-wing "Macedonia is Greek" campaign—which is why the public prosecutor in Athens pressed charges against its authors.

But there is more to *The Crisis in the Balkans* which makes it relevant for socialists everywhere. The nationalism of Serbian and Croatian—not to mention Western—leaders has plunged the Balkans into a bloodbath. Against this horror, the authors put forward a desperately needed internationalist alternative to the crisis.

Read the pamphlet the Greek regime is desperately trying to suppress—in this English translation by Mark Matcott.

Proceeds from the sale of this pamphlet will go to the international campaign organized to defend the five Greek socialists charged with treason.

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IS THIS TREASON?

The Crisis in the Balkans: The Macedonian Question and the Working Class

Five Socialists in Greece Face Treason Charges for Distributing This Pamphlet

Translated by Mark Matcott

IN MAY of this year, the public prosecutor in Athens pressed charges of treason against five Greek socialists. Their crime? Writing and distributing this pamphlet, which defends the national rights of Macedonians. The five are accused of "disturbing relations with foreign states," "spreading false information" and "inciting citizens to discord" under laws that date back to the fascist regime of Metaxas. If convicted, each defendant faces 15 years in prison.

continued inside

AN INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION PAMPHLET

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continued from front cover

The Crisis in the Balkans, published in February 1992, argues for recognition of the right of self-determination for Macedonians and against foreign intervention in the war in the former Yugoslavia. These are ideas the Greek government cannot tolerate.

The conservative New Democracy regime has designs on the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. In order to extend its control over this territory, the government has to maintain the fiction that Macedonia does not now—and never has—existed. After intense lobbying, Greece's NATO allies in the European Community agreed to recognize Macedonia only as the "Republic of Skopje." A similar U.S. measure now has the support of over 300 members of Congress.

The regime has organized a campaign of intimidation against anyone who opposes this chauvinism. Earlier this year, four students received prison sentences of 19 months each for distributing leaflets headed "The neighboring peoples are not our enemies." Before that, six socialists were each sentenced to six months in jail for pasting up posters with the slogan "Recognize Independent Slav-Macedonia."

In this latest trial, the prosecution witnesses are notorious figures from the extreme right wing of Greek politics. The star witness is Constantine Plevris, leader of the 4th of August Party, named for the day the fascists came to power in Greece. Plevris believes Hitler was inspired by Plato and claims, in his book *Talking About Jews,* that the Holocaust never happened.

Fortunately, trade unionists and socialists around the world have responded to this attack on civil liberties. The executive committee of the General Confederation of Workers in Greece (the Greek equivalent of the AFL-CIO) backed the demand that the government drop the charges. Members of parliament, socialists and activists from around the world have offered their support. A list of individuals and organizations who endorse the campaign appears on page 36.

The trial was set for September 18, but was postponed when the Lawyers Guild of Greece joined the general strike that swept the country in September. It is now scheduled for January 26, 1993.

This brazen attack on civil liberties must be fought vigorously—it is a struggle that is relevant everywhere. *We appeal to you for help!* Please send statements of support and donations to: Committee to Defend Greek Socialists, c/o ISO, P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616.

Translator's Preface

Mark Matcott
International Socialist Organization, Australia

THE URGENCY which lies behind the publication of this pamphlet should be obvious: five members of the *Organosi Sosialistiki Epanastasi* (OSE—the Organization of Socialist Revolution in Greece) have been charged for publishing and promoting it.

The Greek government wishes the world to believe that there is total support for its line on Macedonia, a line it has been cultivating for some years now. This pamphlet provides proof that there are large numbers of Greeks who do not follow the conservative government's line. It argues that there is an oppressed Macedonian minority in Greece and that the roots of its oppression reach back to the Greek Civil War of 1945-49, the Balkan Wars and beyond.

The Crisis in the Balkans also shows that there is an internationalist analysis of of the Macedonians' national struggle—and that the socialist movement must remain vitally connected with this fight. It is all the more critical today—with the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia in flames—to assert the tradition of socialism from below. This is the only tradition which can offer a way forward against the nationalist adventures and chauvinist warmongering which we see in the Balkans today.

The original Greek pamphlet contained 10 articles. All but the first three were reprints of articles in OSE's newspaper *Worker Solidarity*. I have translated nine of the 10 articles for this pamphlet. I omitted an article taken from Trotsky's writings on the Balkan wars because it is already available to English speakers. Trotsky's writings provide an excellent basis for coming to grips with the crisis in the Balkans today.

I apologize for the fact that I cannot explain the role and political persuasion of everyone mentioned in the pamphlet. To offer a bit of help, however, to readers who are less familiar with modern Greek history, here are a few brief notes:

Mitsotakis heads up the conservative New Democracy government of Greece today. It has lost a great deal of popular support because of its economic austerity policies.

Its main parliamentary opposition is PASOK, led by Papandreou.

The KKE, the Greek Communist Party, is a sizeable party with substantial support in the industrial working class and representation in parliament. It was until recently a "Moscow-line" Stalinist party. While Moscow is less appealing now, the KKE has not broken with the essentials of Stalinism.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, the KKE played a key role in leading the forces of EAM and ELAS, the national liberation organization and army, which attempted to roll back the invasions of first Italian, then German, fascism. After the war, the KKE was strong enough to make a bid to rule Greece. Eventually, though, its Republican Army lost—to the combined forces of the Greek bourgeoisie and British and American imperialism in a civil war that lasted for four years.

Metaxas was the fascist dictator of Greece, who came to power in 1936. Ironically, he was forced to oppose the Italian fascists at the start of the Second World War. The Italian invasion of Greece failed, but the subsequent German occupation succeeded, causing enormous suffering for the Greek people.

Introduction

Kostas Pittas

THE WORSENING of the Balkan crisis has brought the Macedonian question to center stage once again. The arguments have spread, so much so that the opposition and even trade unions have had to take a position: chauvinist or non-chauvinist, in the face of the outbreak of war in Yugoslavia.

A lot of questions have been raised.

What is the origin of the crisis in the Balkans? What is hidden behind these ethnic clashes? Who is responsible for the tragedy of war which has made the region the powder keg of Europe once again? What is the role of the Greek ruling class? Is it defending itself. . . or is it taking the offensive? Can the European Economic Community (EEC) or the United Nations (UN) provide a solution? How about a united Yugoslavia under Milošević? What is the role of the ethnic minorities involved. . . and especially of the Macedonian minority in Greece? Above all, how can anyone effectively counter the chauvinist attacks of New Democracy? Can it be done through a "national accord" or through the building of struggle in the workplaces, the colleges and campuses?

Macedonia, as the soft underbelly of the Balkans, has seen every local ruling class demand it for themselves, from the last century to the present day. It has become the center of an unprecedented campaign by the New Democracy government, which has opened the way for fascist reptiles to clamber out of the sewers in which the working-class movement had buried them for so long.

For every worker and student who wants to fight New Democracy's attacks, an understanding of this chauvinism is crucial.

Unfortunately, the ideas being cultivated by the parliamentary opposition provide anything but a convincing answer to these attacks.

This pamphlet aims to help in the clarification of all the issues that militants have to contend with, in order to resist the warmongering and to find a way forward.

This way forward will not be found via diplomatic intervention by the EEC, nor through a "peacekeeping role" for the United Nations, nor by the "solution" of a Greater Serbia.

None of these ideas can be the basis for working-class struggle, for building an anti-chauvinist front. . . or, for peace in the Balkans. They all assume that a "solution" can be imposed from above, by imperialism, by the EEC, by the UN, by Milošević.

They reflect one thing: the collapse of the regimes in Eastern Europe and the USSR has led to such a crisis in the reformist left that it does not dare to believe that the only force that can really provide a lasting and peaceful solution to the Balkan crisis is the working class.

The traditions of Stalinism and Social Democracy are not the only ones that exist in the workers' movement. The struggles of workers and youth right from the beginning of the century all the way to the anti-war demonstrations against imperialist intervention in the Persian Gulf, have kept alive another tradition: the only one able to provide an answer that benefits workers and *not* imperialists. It is the answer of Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky and Pouliopoulos! It is the strategy of combining the fight for national liberation with the fight for socialism.

This tradition, distorted and smothered by Stalinism and social democracy, reviled by bourgeois propaganda, needs to be revived today, not just in order to resist chauvinist attacks but also to provide a perspective that does not allow the barbed wire of national boundaries to separate workers from each other. This tradition restores the vision of a new and different society, without exploitation and national oppression.

It is the tradition of supporting the right of every oppressed nationality to self-determination, of internationalism, of workers' revolution and of socialism from below, that this pamphlet aims to bring to light and to serve as a guide to action.

To this end, we are obliged to start by disproving the thousands of lies and chauvinist myths that shroud the facts. We have to bring to the surface all the elements that Greek governments have consciously covered with tons of mud in the service of Greek capitalism.

It is necessary to present the reality about the Macedonians and the Macedonian minority within Greece. It is necessary to escape from the hypocritical worship of ancient times so central to government propaganda and to show that the Macedonian nation not only existed and still exists, but also that the minority in Western Greek Macedonia has been hammered for decades, repressed by the Greek state.

The struggles of the Macedonian minority often found support and a perspective for a way forward within workers' struggles because both were the targets of Greek bosses.

Finally, Greek capitalists are not, and were not, defending themselves against aggressive national dangers. *They are indeed the aggressors with the aim of greater economic and geographic penetration of the Balkans within the framework of international capitalist competition.*

Only after uncovering this reality can we turn to the genuine revolutionary tradition on the national question, the tradition of Lenin, to provide a perspective for anti-chauvinist struggle.

At the heart of Lenin's tactics on the national question was the recognition and support by revolutionary socialists of the right of oppressed nations to self-determination, even to the extent of separation, if they demanded it. What Lenin was after, by applying this tactic, was *not* the creation of lots of little states, which would only reproduce the chaos of national capitalist competition. He aimed to find the way to *unite* the struggles of workers in the oppressor nation with those in the oppressed nation—both against the common enemy, capitalism. The fact that a lasting and true solution to workers' problems only lay in workers' revolution and socialism must not be allowed to hide the necessity for revolutionaries *to convert national questions into a launching pad for class struggle.*

For the Bolsheviks, one of the most important preconditions for the victory of the 1917 revolution was to stop nationalities oppressed by Tsarism from seeing Russian workers as the oppressor. On the other hand, Russian workers had to open up their own battle lines with their own ruling class by demanding an end to Tsarist oppression of other nationalities.

Far from dividing the workers' movement, this tactic of supporting the right to national self-determination united workers in the oppressor and the oppressed country. It smashed the illusions of Russian workers that their problems could be solved by way of Russian imperialist expansion and dissolved the illusion among oppressed peoples that their liberation would come through alliances with local nationalist

leaders. After the Russian Revolution, Lenin wrote:

> We are told that Russia will be split up into pieces, that it will divide into independent republics. But we have no reason to fear this. What is important for us is not where the borders will end up, but maintaining the unity of workers of all countries through joint struggle against the bourgeoisie.

This tactic did not just remain on the drawing board. Within the revolutionary Soviet Union the "experiment" of national self-determination within socialist revolution was put into practice. Russian, Ukrainian, Azeri workers came together to create their own history: the history of a society without exploitation and ethnic, racial and other kinds of oppression.

This society was overturned by Stalinist counter-revolution, which created a totalitarian state capitalist system. The reformist Communist parties of the West in their turn also twisted revolutionary history out of shape.

After the collapse of Stalinism, the only answer to the horror of the capitalist market and the tragedy of war lies in the rediscovery of the revolutionary Marxist tradition. Central to this tradition is the right of nations to self-determination, support for the rights of oppressed minorities, opposition to chauvinism and warmongering of one's *own* ruling class. It aims to unite workers across the Balkans to build towards socialist revolution.

This revolutionary politics is what this pamphlet seeks to make real.

February 1992

1. Pantelis Pouliopoulos, at one time General Secretary of the Greek Communist Party and leader of Trotsky's Left Opposition in Greece.

Macedonia: New Chauvinist Mobilization

Panos Garganas

FOR YEARS now, Greeks have become accustomed to government propaganda which uses the term "pseudo-state" when referring to Turkish Cypriots in Northern Cyprus. Recently, following the reactions of the Australian government, the Greek government repertoire has included the forgotten theme of Greek chauvinists: the "pseudo-state" of the Macedonians.

While Cypriot President Vasiliou longs to absorb the "pseudo-state" of Turkish Cyprus within a united Cypriot Republic, Greek diplomacy is discovering another glorious battlefield—the isolation of the "pseudo-state" of Macedonia.

What crime by Macedonians in Australia has produced the holy outrage of both government and opposition in Athens?

Fifty thousand migrants from Macedonia who live in Australia:

> . . . declare their unity and autonomy. They have their own radio program, they have won recognition of their language as the Macedonian language and they have won some government grants. Among their privileges has been to get equal time with Greeks on television. (*Free Press,* Athens, March 22, 1988)

Incredible! Equal time with Greeks. The Greek state will not tolerate such insults. It sent a representative to Melbourne, founded an Institute of Macedonian Studies, organized a "scientific" conference in Melbourne, systematized the Greek lobby and now intends to send an archaeological exhibition aiming to "prove" the Hellenism of Macedonia in order to complete the assault on those agents of Skopje (capital of the Yugoslavian republic of Macedonia) who "dare to call themselves Macedonians."

Needless to say this has created a reaction. Macedonian migrants from Yugoslavia have organized demonstrations outside Greece's "scientific conference." The Australian government has had to take a second look at its policy in regard to what is or is not Macedonian.

These events ignited a patriotic upsurge in Athens. The name of the Ministry of Northern Greece was changed. There has even been a long series on television about the "Greekness" of Macedonia from ancient times to the present day.

So the "Macedonian question," which everyone has treated as a ghost from the past, is now well and truly on the political agenda in Greece. It has simmered away in recent years without taking on major proportions. Since 1974, the conservative New Democracy government and current PASOK government have talked about the "danger from the East" and have pursued a policy of "opening up" to the Balkans. They have called into question the Macedonian Federation (founded, with its capital of Skopje, within the boundaries of Tito's Yugoslavia).

The political changes following the fall of the junta in Greece opened the doors for the return of political refugees. Slowly all those who cared to return to Greece have done so, except for those fighters in the Republican Army who took part in the second guerilla war as Macedonians. Fifty years after the famous decision of the Third International and the Greek Communist Party in regard to Macedonia and almost thirty years after the Greek civil war, the Greek state continues to be anxious

enough to deny "Slav-Macedonians" the possibility of national reconciliation.

Another battleground for this stubborn Greek diplomacy is its denial of the existence of Macedonians and their language where it concerns university degrees. Greek students who have studied in Skopje have been forced to drop out because their degree is not recognized by Greek authorities. The justification? Their studies are in the Macedonian language—a language which does not exist! The Defense Department will not give Macedonians exemptions from military service and banks will not change their money.

If another country took these kinds of measures against Greece, there would be a tremendous outcry. A few years ago, the Greek courts refused to convict a Greek driver, who while passing through Skopje, had fatally injured one of the locals. The official decision of the court was that the documents of the traffic police in Skopje were inadmissible because they had been written in the Macedonian language!

One way or another the Greek state continues to demand that Yugoslavia wipe one of its federal republics from its map, to incorporate it into Serbia and to call the Macedonians *Southern Serbs* or the like.

When the Turkish state denies the existence of the Kurds and describes them as mountain-dwelling Turks, its racist policy is presented as proof of how right it is for Greece to hold the line against Turkish expansionism. But when the Yugoslav state refuses to impose the fate of Kurds on its own Macedonians, this is regarded by Greece as a provocation.

Hypocrisy, after all, knows no bounds!

Fascination With Ancient History

What are the "scientific" arguments of the apologists for this policy? There are theories about the Greekness of Macedonia from ancient times, through the Byzantine era and up to the present day. There are theories about the "fabricated" or "non-existent" national consciousness of the Macedonians as a separate nation.

The efforts of the bourgeoisie to extend present nations backward in time to show their historical continuity from the earliest of ancient times are laughable. The formation of nations and the development of national consciousness are social processes tied to the development of the bourgeoisie and of the capitalist mode of production. To transfer these concepts into previous historical periods of pre-capitalist modes of production is just myth-making, furthering the interests of the current bourgeoisie.

What about the so-called "fabrication" of national identity among the Macedonians? Martis, the predecessor of conservative Greek president Karamanlis, both before and after the junta, never missed an opportunity to declare that the Macedonian question was directed by the hand of communism. As he would have it:

> Today's problem had its beginnings in 1921 in Moscow when the Comintern along with all the Balkan parties, at the behest of the Bulgarians, established the autonomy of Macedonia and Thrace. In 1944, Tito, all-powerful in his communist stronghold, seized the opportunity and renamed Southern Serbia as Macedonia. So from 1944 onwards, the Macedonian nation began. Until that time, we never come across the word Macedonia among the Slavs. (*Free Press,* Athens, April 28, 1988)

This statement is an outrageous fairy tale!

The national liberation movement of the Macedonians made its first appearance in the then-Ottoman territory of Macedonia in 1893 with the formation of the VMRO

(Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization), which demanded the liberation of Macedonia and its inclusion in a Balkan Federation. The VMRO won mass support among the peasants because its fighters were terrorizing Turkish *chiftliki* (large-scale farmers), forcing them to withdraw to the cities where they contented themselves with receiving some rent or selling some of their holdings to peasants.

The response was such that on July 20, 1903, Macedonians organized the insurrection of Ilinden. A Macedonian republic was established but it was short-lived, drowned in blood by the Sultan using a large concentration of the Ottoman army based in Salonika. From among the discontented members of this gathering of military might would later come the revolution led by the Young Turks, who set in motion the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish republic.

Macedonia and the Balkan Wars

The fighters of VMRO, defeated after the crushing of the uprising, based their hopes on the elections being held for the first time by the Young Turks. One of their leaders, Vlakhov, was elected to parliament and, according to the testimony of Abraham Benaroya, became a member of the Salonika Federation.

The development of ties between Macedonian revolutionaries and the socialist (and later communist) movement was not accidental. What was missing from the Macedonian movement was not national consciousness so much as strength in its middle class to fight off its competitors who were already on the attack—Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian expansionism expressed themselves through the Balkan Wars.

The demand for a free Macedonia within a Balkan Federation could only find favor in the newly emerging socialist movement. In 1910, the first Balkan Conference was held. The Social Democratic parties of Serbia, Rumania and Bulgaria took part. There were also speakers from Macedonia. Greek socialists sent congratulatory telegrams—which Trotsky noted in his correspondence. The meeting condemned military preparations, warned that the "Balkan question" could not be solved by leaving it in the greedy hands of those who dreamed of a Greater Greece, Greater Bulgaria or Greater Serbia. The meeting set out its proposal for a Balkan Federal Republic.

The hopes of not only the socialists but also the Macedonian revolutionaries were crushed by the whirlwind of the Balkan Wars prior to the First World War. Macedonia was shared around between Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria.

So how Greek was the Macedonian area, given that it was won by the Greek army? The Ottoman census of 1906 for the whole of Macedonia claims 1,150,000 Moslems, 623,000 Orthodox Greeks, and 627,000 Orthodox Bulgarians. Even if we count the Greek Orthodox (that is, those who adhered to the patriarchate in Constantinople) as Greeks, they still form a minority. The census of 1912 for Macedonia and the Aegean claims 43 percent Greeks (17 percent in Western Thrace).

Only after the war between Greece and Turkey—the "Asia Minor disaster" in the early 1920s—and the exchange of their respective populations, did the proportion of Greeks rise to 89 percent in Aegean Macedonia, and to 62 percent in Western Thrace.

What about the Macedonians? In Aegean Macedonia, they had to endure being "tidied up" through compulsory Hellenization. In the Kingdom of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, Macedonians were met with the oppression of Serbian nationalism (as were the Croats and Moslems). In Bulgarian Macedonia, the VMRO degenerated into a servile organization in the hands of Bulgarian nationalists. The epilogue to this phase of the Macedonian struggle was presented most graphically by Leon Trotsky, who,

as war time correspondent for a Kiev newspaper, had followed the Balkan Wars. In 1912, he wrote:

> The revolutionaries of national struggles, as opposed to social revolutionaries, always endeavor to unite their conspiratorial action with diplomatic efforts either towards their own country or towards others... If the Hungarian Kossuth and the Italian Mazzini often appealed to the people and also to European diplomats, how much more directly was this strategy imposed on the revolutionaries of little backward Macedonia, which found itself at the crossroads of international interests... The patent inability to decide the fate of Macedonia by recourse to their own strength forced the Macedonian revolutionaries to bargain with the aspirations of the major and minor powers—the war swallowed them up.

Macedonia and the Communist Party

In 1923, the Bulgarian government of Stamboliski (of the Peasant Party), in an attempt to improve relations between Bulgaria and Serbia, signed the Treaty of Nish. It was seen as a betrayal. The VMRO supported the army coup which toppled Stamboliski and organized his assassination.

The Bulgarian Communist Party (CP) at first declared itself neutral in this "confrontation between two wings of the bourgeois class." Through the intervention of the Comintern, however, the Bulgarian CP realized that it had abstained at a crucial moment of class struggle and tried belatedly to correct its mistake by means of an unsuccessful uprising in the autumn of 1923.

Weakened by these events, the Bulgarian CP tried to pull together an anti-dictatorship front alongside the Peasant Party. It tried to draw the VMRO leftwards once again, raising the demand for an independent Macedonia within a Balkan Federation —as opposed to the demand for the absorption of Macedonia into Bulgaria. In fact, an agreement between the CP and VMRO was signed, but the leaders of the VMRO reneged. Only a small section gathered around Vlakhov, who had re-entered center stage, organized within the CP as an expression of Macedonian federationists instead of Bulgarian chauvinists.

The decision of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in 1924 regarding Macedonia belongs to this period. It was adopted by the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and other parties of the Balkan Communist Federation.

It emphasized the right of Macedonians to break free from Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria in order to set up their own independent state.

This decision has often been criticized as mistaken because it created the pretext for bourgeois governments to accuse the KKE of national betrayal and thereby to isolate it. The Comintern had, it was said, imposed its will from above on behalf of the Bulgarian CP without taking into account the consequences for the other Communist parties. The Comintern had also, supposedly, failed to take into consideration the changed composition of the population of Macedonia following the transfer of the Greek population from Turkey.

These criticisms are baseless. The KKE, in spite of its weaknesses, was a revolutionary party which had come into conflict with Greek expansionism when it condemned the Asia Minor adventure. Bourgeois condemnations of the KKE's "national betrayal" existed in any event, regardless of the Macedonian question. Macedonian oppression—for example, the attempts to extinguish their language—was a reality. Whether they were a minority or not in Macedeonia was not the decisive question.

national, social, intellectual. It teaches the working masses to think internationally, and in this way shows itself to be the only consistent defender of the right of national self-determination, which on the lips of bourgeois diplomacy is nothing but a shameful lie.

5. The tactic, expressed by the 1924 slogans, "United and Independent Macedonia," "United and Independent Thrace," based itself on a mature weighing up of the revolutionary forces in the Balkans, which has continued throughout the conferences of the Balkan Communist Federation (BCF) (fifth, sixth, seventh). . . It has accompanied the organization of a worker-peasant revolution in Bulgaria, which was defeated by fascist terror.

Discussion about the tactics of the BCF and, especially, the Bulgarian Communist Party at this particular period. . . can and must take place within the Communist parties of the Balkans, with the aim of trying to find whatever mistakes may have been made and to draw all the lessons of experience for the future. For the sake of such a discussion, the presidency of the BCF must provide the necessary materials to everyone, taking, of course, all of the normal precautions against infiltration.

6. Irrespective, however, of the position that one takes on this historical question, there is no doubt that the two slogans: "United and Independent Macedonia" and "United and Independent Thrace" cannot even for propaganda purposes be thrown up by the KKE because they come into conflict with the obvious line-up of forces, as it has developed mainly from grass roots changes that have taken place (the lack of a national-revolutionary movement in Greece, the general retreat of the national-revolutionary movement, the transformation of the autonomist organizations into organs of Italian fascism, the extermination of federationists) as well as the huge ethnic changes which happened with the massive influx of Greek refugees into Macedonia and Thrace.

Consequently, the slogans, which the third regular Congress held simply to be propagandist, not only have no propaganda value for the program of communism, but they also damage the revolutionary struggle of the Greek proletariat. Instead of teaching the working masses in Greece to think in an internationalist way, they cloud workers' thinking with the great confusion they create, a confusion which is reflected in the mess of perceptions which from the beginning until the present was created among the most conscious workers and communists. One contradiction after another in the journalistic organs of the party, a veritable tower of Babel among the party's parliamentarians which has embarrassed communism, hysterical formulations by the "Leninists" of the political bureau about the recent bombing attempt by Bulgarian fascists which was condemned by *Humanité:*[4]

> The latest explosions. . . are occasional manifestations. . . of the sense of outrage of the Macedonian people. They are attempts. . . to achieve the throwing off of the national yoke which is weighing down the Macedonian people!!! (*Rizospastis,* September 30, 1927)

7. The Opposition of the KKE regard it as the urgent duty of all oppositionist comrades who are accused, indeed any of its members, to decisively defend the internationalist policy of communism against all slanders. They are obliged unhesitatingly to condemn nationalist policies, which the Greek, in common with the Serbian and Bulgarian bourgeoisies, have applied through "voluntary" and involuntary migrations

of the unfortunate Macedonian people, using them as victims once again of chauvinist Asia Minor adventure.

They must declare with all their might that far from solving the Macedonian problem, these methods complicate it even further and perpetuate the causes of new destructive wars.

The only way to find a definite solution to the issue is through a united struggle of all oppressed nationalities and refugees, together with the worker and peasant masses of the Balkan region, to establish a Balkan Federation of Worker and Peasant Republics. This is the only way the Macedonian people can achieve full national self-determination, including a separate state, if that is their wish.

A living example of this kind of solution is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The above text, taken from a larger article: "Problems of the Communist Opposition in Greece," was published for the first time in the journal *Spartakos,* Number 2, in February of 1928.

1. The Opposition here means the Trotskyist Opposition within the KKE.
2. *Rizospastis*, which means radical, is the newspaper of the KKE.
3. *Komitatzis* means an armed Bulgarian guerilla.
4. *Humanité* is the newspaper of the French Communist Party.

Macedonia: How "Non-Existent" Is It?

H.T.

THE MACEDONIAN question has existed for some time and still exists, no matter how "unpatriotic" it is deemed to be.

Not only the history of the Slav-Macedonian population of Greece in the 20th century, but also an on-the-spot journalistic or sociological survey in the regions of Florina, Kastoria, Pellis, Kilkis and so on will persuade the most cautious observer that if nothing else, there exists on Greek territory today a minority with a different language, and with different cultural and national characteristics. It has been catalogued by the censuses of 1928 and 1940.

This minority was exploited by EAM-ELAS and the Republican Army[1] and has been persecuted at various times and in many ways by the Greek state.

Every nation-state and every social formation arises out of historical developments and claims for itself a particular *fictitious* homogeneity and unity, set in place not only by the line-up of class forces but also by the predominance of a national, linguistic and cultural grouping. War, economic control, colonialism and also the imposition of a cultural and linguistic monopoly are basic preconditions for the establishment of every nation-state.

Within the confines of class societies, ethnic, religious and cultural minorities are obliged to defend themselves against organized attempts to render them passive or to integrate them.

The history of the formation of modern Greek society and civilization is determined by the contradictory problem of the co-existence in the one geographical area of *several* ethnic groups.

Through various adventures (the international conditions of 1826-32, annexation of the Eptanisa and Thessaly, the "Macedonian struggle," the wars of 1912-13, the adventures in 1919-23, foreign occupation, acquisition of the Dodecanese and so on), the Greek state has pulled together its present form, in an effort which did not restrict itself to ideology, to build up a unity and homogeneity. All this is in spite of the fact that in today's Greece there live not only Greeks but also Turks, Albanians, Vlachs, Bulgars, other Slavs, Jews, Armenians and more.

A tough job indeed to homogenize all these!

During the period of 1904-08 the bourgeoisies of Greece and Bulgaria found themselves demanding not only large sections of the wider Macedonian area, but also state rulership over the Slav-Macedonians. Whatever armed gang happened to occupy a particular region obliged the Slav-Macedonian population to follow it and cleave to the Greek patriarchate or to the Bulgarian exiarchate.

So it is not surprising to find that official historiography in the "era of Macedonian struggle" contains tales of Greek slaughter or violence at the expense of Slav-Macedonians and Bulgarian villages which did not declare themselves Greek. What is more, Slav-speaking people were numbered among the Greeks, even though they called themselves Stojko, Mitre, Trajko, Stojan or Zlate . . . or succeeded in being declared Greek only through the intervention of a translator.

In any event, the census of 1928 makes mention of 81,844 Slav speakers, that of

1940 mentions 94,509. The army general staff claims the numbers were less than this, whereas independent surveys put the numbers at about double! What is certain is that *the Greek state accepted the existence of a Slav-Macedonian minority.*

It is natural enough that this Slav-Macedonian consciousness is called into question, and not just "officially." But the argument is refuted on at least five grounds: (a) the economic, social, political cultural history of the Slav-Macedonian population of the wider Greek region; (b) the existence of a distinct Slav-Macedonian dialect; (c) the historical creation of legal and cultural forms, which distinguish and characterize the minority (such as the *zadruga,* or farming collective); (d) the semantic vagueness of the ideological concept of "national consciousness"; and (e) the historical realization that for a collective to draw itself together with shared national characteristics it does not necessarily do so through a national liberation movement, nor does it prevent the acquisitive interest of already existing nation states.

If the position of the Greek state on this matter is to be expected, there is on the other hand considerable interest in the history of the Communist Party's (KKE) line, as much in regard to the national minority issue in general as to the Slav-Macedonians in particular.

In the beginning, anti-militarist and internationalist communists in Greece (who had recommended desertion and had entered the army to make revolutionary propaganda during the 1919-22 period), followed the policy of a Balkan Communist Federation. From the end of 1924, a decision of the third extraordinary council meeting embraced the aim of a united Balkan confederation; in other words, *an autonomous polyethnic state in the Macedonian and Thracian area.* What was later erased in 1927 by Kordatos and Apostolidis[2] points up the difficulties and limits of this line. Many of the 3,031 fighters who after 1929 were thrown out of Greece were dealt with because they had sought the "breaking off of a portion of the empire."

Even as late as January 1934, the KKE would acknowledge that national oppression existed and would speak about "national self-determination even to the point of separatism for oppressed Macedonians and Thracians." But the radical strategic and political realignments of 1934-36 (United and Popular Fronts, intervention in reformist unions, anti-dictatorship co-operation with the more "enlightened" political representatives of the bourgeoisie and so on) altered the climate within which the line on Macedonia might change. From April until December 1935 the relevant slogans of the KKE were based on the idea of equal political and national rights of all minorities. The shift was towards equality of rights and away from self-determination.

In this period, on the side of the People's Party, Gocan's pro-monarchist notion of "Macedonian Union" arose. This entailed administrative independence for Macedonia and the removal of (Asia Minor) refugees. This political formation won 14.8 percent of the vote in Macedonia at the 1935 elections.

After the Italian invasion, the position of the KKE that the national minorities belonged to the "moving forces of the revolution" (Decision of the 6th Plenum, January 1934), was diluted within the new national independence orientation (first letter of Zakhariadis, Statement of Formation of EAM, etc.).[3]

The violence of the Bulgarians required the KKE, within the EAM, to express its outrage and its solidarity with the (homogenous and indivisible?) people of Macedonia and Thrace. In any case, around the middle of 1943, the now strong ELAS, which had taken on the job of balancing the Bulgarian interest in the Slav-Macedonians, declared its faith in the militant and brotherly unity of Greeks and Slav-Macedonians who

would "fight hand-in-hand for the liberation of the common homeland, Greece" and declared the need to stop all persecution of this particular minority, to permit the speaking of its language and to ensure complete equality of rights.

However, there were some Slav-Macedonians who agreed or were compelled by the Germans to arm themselves and fight in the reactionary PAO. Towards the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944, ELAS undertook to "bring them to their senses," destroying their villages or murdering the opinion leaders among the Slav-Macedonians, as in the case of Goumenisa (Easter 1944).

The formation of SNOF (Slav-Macedonian People's Liberation Front) in June 1944, out of two independent Slav-Macedonian battalions in Kastoria and Edessa, would be viewed later on as mistaken and damaging because they would eventually head off to join the partisans of Yugoslavia and leave the EAM network.

Naturally, bourgeois critics of EAM-ELAS pretend not to know that the whole posture of the KKE and the resistance organizations in regard to the Slav-Macedonians corresponded to their own interest in ensuring the continuation of the Greek nation-state and "normal" settling of the problem of minorities by having them stay within and under the rule of the Greek state.

After 1946, the KKE invested a great deal in strengthening the Slav-Macedonians because the bases of the Republican Army were in areas where numbers of this minority were large, perhaps even where they were a majority. A number of leaders agree that one in three of the fighters of the Republican Army in the Macedonian area was Slav-Macedonian. If 10,000 men and 1,000 women of this group fought in the Republican Army and many more were forced from the area or offered services to the movement, then the return of the KKE (in 1949) to the line of self-determination was a little late in coming—especially if we accept that the Slav-Macedonians did not enter the struggle of the Republican Army simply to serve the advancement of the "common homeland, Greece."

Today in Florina, Kastoria, Kilkis, Pellis and other regions, there are as many Slav-Macedonians who did *not* escape after August 1949 into Yugoslavia. It is worth noting that if Metaxas recognized the existence of 95,000 Slav-Macedonians in 1940, today Sarzetakis and Papathemelis speak of a "non-existent" nationality and language.

But these men at the loudspeaker of national self-aggrandizement (who can still be insulted in Australia by non-existent representatives of a non-existent nationality!) have to face up to an unhappy dilemma. They must accept and show either that some kind of genocidal event has wiped out this particular minority or that "dark forces" have undertaken to bankroll several thousand provocateurs who, in order to bring into doubt the pure Hellenism of Macedonia, persist in speaking the non-existent Slav-Macedonian dialect.

It is obvious, though, that the Panhellenes and their followers will only with difficulty give up their love affair with the ghost of Alexander the Great. It is a problem for any section of the left: official, renovated, revolutionary or any other section of the left, insofar as it ignores or tries to ignore the issue and the first acts of resistance of the Slav-Macedonians of North West (Greek) Macedonia.

The issue is especially relevant to those who demand "autonomy" in the face of ruling class ideology and politics, because they serve to countersign the features of its politics that deal with the nation state, the integrity of national borders, "danger" from the east or north or whatever direction!

One thing is easy to guess: being at all sensitive to personal, political and social rights forces you to touch on the problems of a minority which has been persecuted by all means and yet today is regarded as non-existent.

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1. See translator's introduction.
2. Kordatos and Apostolidis were leaders of SEKE and the early KKE. SEKE was the socialist party from which the KKE was born.
3. Nikos Zakhariadis, trained in the USSR, was KKE General Secretary in 1934. He was elected to parliament shortly before Metaxas came to power in 1936.

The Slav-Macedonians in the Resistance and the Civil War

Petros Tsangaris

THE COLLAPSE of Yugoslavia and the likelihood of the Republic of Macedonia becoming independent has sent Greece into a "national frenzy" over the Macedonian question.

On the right and, unfortunately, also on the left, the opinion is expressed that some kind of unpatriotic conspiracy—led by either the Americans, the Italians, or by the Serbians—is involved. The fact that the U.S. State Department spoke of oppression of the Slav-Macedonians in Greece was the "unshakable proof" of the existence of such an American role, while the postponement of the four-way Balkan conference, through which Mitsotakis hoped to isolate the Republic of Macedonia, was blamed by the Greek press on the Italians.

But the history of the Slav-Macedonians shows that they were not the agents of some particular imperialism. On the contrary, they struggled against the Nazis, the Italian fascists and American imperialists, on the side of EAM and the Republican Army.

Oppression

In 1928, the official statistics showed that there were 82,000 Slav-Macedonians living in Greek Western Macedonia. The Greek governments did not recognize this population as an ethnic minority; it saw them as Greeks. Of course, there was no political support for maintaining their cultural inheritance nor their language. Only Greek was taught in schools.

The arrival of the Metaxas dictatorship in 1936 meant an extensive pogrom at the expense of Slav-Macedonians to Hellenize them by force. They were forbidden under heavy penalties from speaking their language in public and massive sections of the population were exiled.

At the same time, the Yugoslav government was following a similarly violent Serbification of those Slav-Macedonians who lived in Yugoslavia. There, too, they were not recognized as a minority; thousands were jailed or exiled; and a plan was enacted to colonize the area with Serbs.

These tactics clearly were not able to solve the problem in either country. The desire to resist oppression became stronger among the Slav-Macedonians. Oppression only served to unite them in a common consciousness.

In Yugoslavia, the resistance reached its peak in 1939 and 1940 with daily demonstrations against the government in Belgrade. In Greece, the struggle of the Slav-Macedonians was to emerge onto the stage of history within the context of the Resistance and the Civil War.

Resistance and Civil War

In 1941, EAM and ELAS were formed under the leadership of the Communist Party, which supported equal rights for the Slav-Macedonian minority. The cream of that minority turned towards ELAS. Thousands of Slav-Macedonian fighters headed for its lines in Western Macedonia.

In 1944, the Slav-Macedonian People's Liberation Front, known as SNOF, was formed. It was the political organization of the Slav-Macedonians within EAM. Keramicef, who was on the executive committee of SNOF, was also a member of PEEA (Political Committee for National Liberation)—that is to say, the government of Free Greece.

The 2/28 battalion in the Florina/Kastoria region and the battalion of Kaymakcalan in the Edessa/Aridhaia region were purely Slav-Macedonian units. It is no accident that when the militia entered Western Macedonia in April 1945, the Slav-Macedonians paid in blood for their cooperation with the Communist Party and the resistance.

At the same time, in Yugoslavia, the Slav-Macedonians fought alongside Tito's partisans. Under the leadership of general Vukmanovic (also known as Tempo), they organized their own resistance units and joined the Communist Party *en masse*.

Official Greek propaganda insists that there is no Macedonian national consciousness but that some are Serbs and some are Bulgarians. But as we saw in the case of Yugoslavia and of Bulgaria, rivers of blood separate the Serbian and Bulgarian governments from Slav-Macedonians. In April 1942, Slav-Macedonian partisans organized an uprising in the areas of Monastiri and Prilep. It was drowned in blood by the Bulgarian army of occupation. The non-combatant population responded with mass demonstrations which, in turn, were met with mass murder by the Bulgarians.

Back in Greece, immediately following the Varkiza agreement, the successor to SNOF was formed, the National Liberation Front known as NOF. A women's organizations was also formed, the AZF (Women's Anti-Fascist Front).

In the autumn of 1946, armed divisions of NOF joined forces with the Republican Army of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), fighting against the Greek right and patriotic organizations which were active in the area. Note again that at the end of the Civil War, the Slav-Macedonians had 14,000 fighters from a total of 40,000 of the whole Republican Army. In 1949, NOF had two members of parliament in the mountain government. Mass participation in the struggle also meant mass participation as refugees: at least 35,000 Slav-Macedonians shared the fate of being uprooted from their homeland along with Greek comrades after their defeat in the Civil War.

The Communist Party

The position of the KKE regarding the Slav-Macedonians throughout this whole period was exceptionally vacillating.

The essential problem lay in its continual retreat under the pressure of Greek nationalism, but also its subjugation to the needs of the foreign policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

For the leadership of the KKE, alliances with bourgeois and patriotic parties within EAM, such as Svolos, who was a fanatical believer in the Greekness of Macedonia and leader of the patriotic "Committee For the Defense of Northern Regions" —these were more valuable than consistent internationalist politics.

In the official meeting of Siantos on behalf of the leadership of the KKE with Vukmanovic, Siantos denied the possibility of any solution to the Macedonian question which might touch on the borders of Greece after the war. What is more, the leadership of the KKE torpedoed the agreement between Tzimas and Vukmanovic for coordination of resistance within a Balkan general headquarters, by proposing that

ELAS enter the British (!) headquarters for the Middle East. A natural consequence of this politics was the refusal of the KKE to accept the formation of separate military organizations of the Slav-Macedonians during the first years of the resistance.

Even though it allowed the formation of SNOF, many leading figures and ordinary members were tossed out of ELAS. In October 1944, the two battalions of Slav-Macedonians were obliged to cross the border into Yugoslav territory.

The KKE viewed NOF with suspicion and, up to 1946, said so openly. *Pressure from its own rank and file however forced it towards the opposite direction because everyone could see what side the Slav-Macedonians were on and how willing they were to throw themselves into the struggle.*

The 1948 Tito-Stalin split led a series of communist parties to purge "Titoists." In keeping with this, the KKE beheaded the NOF, purging its leadership and imposing a new, well-controlled one.

Zahariadis, a leader of the KKE at that time, revived the old internationalist line for entirely opportunist reasons. He promised that "the Slav-Macedonian people will find full national reinstatement, as it wishes."

The primary aim of this shift was to split off Slav-Macedonians from the influence of the Yugoslav Communist Party. If Tito promised a Macedonian state in Skopje, Zahariadis promised another independent Macedonian state.

The secondary aim was to guarantee military support from the Macedonian minority in view of the desperate situation facing the Republican Army.

The Slav-Macedonians responded positively. Insofar as it was the Greek communists who were promising self-determination, they threw themselves anew, with all their strength, into struggle alongside them.

A Nation In Struggle

The Slav-Macedonians, or as they wish to be known, the Macedonians, are therefore not some artificial contrivance of imperialists, nor of Tito, nor of anyone else. They are an ethnic group which fought against imperialist interventions in their region, which survived despite oppression and unending persecution. They have been acknowledged by three ruling classes: those of Greece, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

The Slav-Macedonians always oriented themselves to whatever left-wing forces, of any of the three countries, which showed a willingness to support their elementary rights.

So, before the First World War they supported IMRO, which had a socialist orientation. At the start of the resistance struggle, they supported the Bulgarian CP and later ELAS. Until the spring of 1943, the Yugoslav CP had no influence among the Slav-Macedonians. Even the local Communist Party could not control them.

Only when Tito changed his line, recognizing the Macedonians as equal with the other ethnic groups of Yugoslavia, was he able to win their trust.

Characteristically, the first president of the mini-state of Macedonia was Vlakhov, a parliamentarian in the Thessalian federation of 1908, later a member of the Bulgarian CP and finally of the Yugoslav CP.

Today this propaganda about artificial ethnicities seems all the more moronic, at the moment when the Macedonians have chosen by referendum to become independent from Yugoslavia. These were not imperialist agents who voted. They are people who had been hunted by the Greek bourgeoisie and suffered Stalinist persecution in post-war Eastern Europe, people who want finally to have a land to escape to.

Given that no one can assert today that behind the Macedonians lies the hand of Serbia (which is more their enemy), one is reduced to trying to discover some kind of hand from across the Atlantic!

The left must not involve itself in this kind of "detective work," nor nationalist ravings about the ancient world. How much connection there may be between Slav-Macedonians and Alexander the Great is of supreme indifference to us. *How much connection they have with the left is of considerably more importance. This is the history of the Slav-Macedonians to which we must return.*

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The Macedonian Question and the Unhistorical *Kathimerini*

Kostas Pittas

HOW NON-EXISTENT is the minority in Macedonia after all? The Greek newspaper *Kathimerini*[1] set out to "solve" this problem recently.

On January 19, 1992 it published as a supplemental lift-out section an "historical overview of the Macedonian question" which professes to "shed light on the roots of the problem."

Kathimerini-Souflias: Campaign of Mystification

One week later, the same newspaper advertized that "the lift-out will be distributed to all the schools of Greece in conjunction with the Ministry of Education." Mr. Souflias, so as not to waste a moment, after praising the "gift" of *Kathimerini* hastened to declare that "the Ministry of Education will publish a special document to organize a campaign of enlightenment on the history of Macedonia."

At the very moment when Varvitsiotis is discussing whether to take 18-year-olds as conscripts, Souflias rushes to pave the way by strengthening the chauvinist propaganda in schools.

In reality the "gift" from *Kathimerini* is nothing other than the repetition, one more time, of the government's chauvinist propaganda, cobbled together from the analyses of "specialists" on questions of the left (Leondaritis) and on ancient matters from the foreign ministry.

Unfortunately, OLME,[2] instead of countering this propaganda in the schools, has become an accomplice in the creation of the chauvinist climate by organizing not protests... but a discussion day in Florina with Papathemelis, arch-chauvinist, as speaker.

Kathimerini's presentation does not fail to mention once again the Greekness of Alexander the Great, as if one could judge ethnic consciousness today on the basis of whether the ancient Macedonians were related to the Dorians 2,200 years before Christ! However, even if we accept that Macedonia was inhabited by Slavic peoples, it raises as an argument the fact that Basil the Second was called "killer-of-Bulgars," and not "killer-of-Macedonians," in order to prove that there is no, and has never been a Macedonian ethnicity. The second "scientific" argument used by *Kathimerini* is that there is no Macedonian language, but rather a Macedonian dialect containing elements of Bulgarian, Serbian, Russian, Greek and other languages.[3]

Is Averof a "Philoskopje"?

One initial answer to the "argument" is given in the official presentation of professor R.A. Reiss who was entrusted by the Greek government in 1914 to do an ethnographic survey of the country:

> Those whom you would call Bulgarian speakers I would simply call Macedonians ...My researches in Greek and Serbian Macedonia show that the Macedonian language is the result of all the successive conquests the country has undergone... Macedonian is not the language they speak in Sofia... I repeat that the mass of inhabitants there remain simply Macedonians. (Reiss, *Rapport Sur la Situation Des Boulgarophones et Des Musulmans Dans les Nouvelles Provinces Grecques,* 1915. It is referred to in Bulletin Number 1 of the Greek Association for the Rights of Minorities, January 1992.)

Of course, *Kathimerini* asserts that after the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1922, the ethnological make up of Macedonia changed and "the Slav speaking population was recognized by Greece as Bulgarian."

What our "objective historian" is careful to hide from us is that, in 1926, the Ministry of Education went ahead with the publication of the first primary school reader in Macedonian, with the title *Abecedar.* The newspaper *Elevthero Vima,* today's *Vima,*[4] wrote at that same time that "in the villages of the new regions (Macedonia and Western Thrace), parents can seek the establishment of minority primary schools or separate sections in Greek primary schools, where the languages of the minority are taught."

What is truly amazing is that objections to the publication of *Abecedar* were raised by Bulgaria and Serbia because it was not written in their Cyrillic alphabet! The Greek government asserted that the Macedonians were neither Bulgars nor Serbs. Instead, they had their own ethnicity with its own language and script! In the end, diplomacy won out and the Greek government "retreated" in the interests of its alliance with other Balkan capitalisms. (Dimitrios Vogazlis, *Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Greece and Bulgaria,* 1954)

If 1914 and 1926 seem a long way away, *Kathimerini* would do well to head for the official *Hansard* of the Greek parliament in its sittings of September 17-18, 1959, when the Minister for ERE[5] (and of New Democracy after 1974), Averof, referred to the "Macedonian language which is spoken in Skopje and has its own grammar and syntax." (S. Walden, *Greece-Yugoslavia: The Birth and Development of a Crisis,* 1991)

Was the deceased Averof himself a "philoskopje" (a fan of Skopje)?

In the census of 1951, more than 41,000 people had declared themselves Slav speakers (in spite of the repression that would follow from such a declaration). One year earlier, in 1950, Constantinos Karamanlis[6] said in the course of a discussion of the expatriation of a section of the minority after the Civil War: "This population has an ambiguous consciousness. So much so that it is not known whether they are Bulgars, Serbs or Greeks." (*Hansard,* November 30, 1950)

Today, one only needs to take a stroll in Florina, Edessa, Kastoria or Kilkis in order to be assured of the existence of the minority and its language, and, indeed, of the repression in suffers.

Trikoupis: "We Will Make All of Them Greeks"

Kathimerini is not intimidated by such details. The only ones who speak this dialect are "certain merchants of Northern Greece who learn it for reasons of trade and tourism, just as people in Rhodes learn...Swedish." And it goes on: "The appropriation by a Slavic people of an ancient Greek name which is used in Greece as a geographical term (Macedonia) is scientifically baseless and politically unacceptable." But the "scientificness" of *Kathimerini* appears to be very selective and exhausts itself quickly. Following this logic, the municipalities and parishes of Attiki[7] ought to complain to George Bush because some New York prisoners serve their term in the Attica State Prison.

Given that what is scientific is that which serves the interests of Greek capitalists, Leontaritis informs us that the "first official appearance of expansionist designs against Greece manifested themselves during the government of Harilaos Trikoupis."[8] Let us see then what Trikoupis had to say: "When the great war comes, Macedonia will become Greek or Bulgarian according to who wins. If it is taken by the Bulgarians, they will make the population Slavs. If we take it, we will make them all Greeks." (Athens Publishing House, *History of the Greek People,* Volume 14, p. 18)

Here is the cynical confession of a chauvinist who was under no obligation to find pretexts for his chauvinism, as is New Democracy today.

Distortions and Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy surpasses all barriers, however, when Leontaritis tries to use the words of Pantelis Pouliopoulos—the most important Greek Marxist internationalist and implacable enemy of Greek capitalists—to support chauvinist propaganda. Pouliopoulos was Secretary of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) when, as a revolutionary party in the 1920s, it had the slogan of a "United and Independent Macedonia."

Leondaritis uses as his argument the fact that Pouliopoulos accepted that the slogan was mistaken and that in its place there ought to be the slogan of "support for every national freedom for the minorities and the fullest self-determination for them, within a Balkan Federation of people in which the Macedonian people could decide its own fate."

It takes the incredible hypocrisy of a chauvinist academic seeking any way to support the warmongering of the government, to use the words of Pouliopoulos quoted above. Because of them, this revolutionary endured a court-martial and was imprisoned and exiled in 1925-26.

If Pouliopoulos criticized the slogan of a "United and Independent Macedonia," this criticism was in an entirely different direction from that which Leondaritis miserably suggests in order to take issue with the KKE. Pouliopoulos said at the third regular Congress of the KKE in 1924:

> Consequently the way we speak about the national question is not a struggle to convince the imperialist bourgeoisie, but a struggle to urge the masses against the bourgeoisie in whose interest it is to stoke the fires of a new war. Strike out at this imperialist capitalist class to throw off the threat of war, to gain your national independence. We will say this to the masses and this is exactly where the revolutionary character of our slogan lies.

Read also Pouliopoulos' own words in sections 3 and 4 of his essay on the national question, included in this pamphlet (see page 11).

What connection can his words have with the campaign of mystification by *Kathimerini* and the Education Ministry? This is the "history" that "Mr. Leontaritis wants to teach us," and this history, doped with the poison of chauvinism, is what Souflias wants to distribute to schools.

The lift-out ends with this: "Greek success in the West European Alliance naturally is reassuring. But we must stay alert and united on the national matters. We must not relax."

We promise that we will stay alert and united, against the austerity and warmongering of the government of Greek capitalists. We will not relax. And even if the

Communist Party today is not the Communist Party of Pouliopoulos which will push struggle forward, that is all the more reason to build a revolutionary socialist party of the workers in Greece.

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1. *Kathimerini* is a large circulation, right-wing newspaper.
2. OLME is the federation of teachers in secondary schools.
3. TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Greek language itself is full of words from other languages, to the extent that some chauvinists have panicked enough to produce a book on how to eliminate Turkish words. A fatuous exercise. Popular speech is "littered" with words and expressions from Albanian, Italian, Turkish, Serbian and other languages.
4. *Vima* is another large circulation, right-wing newspaper.
5. ERE, or Radical Nationalist Association.
6. Constantinos Karamanlis, conservative to his bootstraps, has been prime minister and president of Greece.
7. Attiki is the area of Greece around and to the north of Athens.
8. Harilaos Trikoupis, 1832-1896. Greek prime minister from 1882 to 1895.

The Crisis in Yugoslavia: The Ones Who Created It Cannot Solve It

Angelos Kalodukas

Why did the civil war break out?

The roots of the civil war can be found in the horrific economic crisis that is gripping Yugoslavia.

In the most recent period, the economy sank by 23 percent. This year, during the first five months, it fell by 21 percent. Unemployment has taken off, workers remain unpaid for months and inflation is rampant.

The economic crisis has its roots in the policy followed by the Titoist establishment. Tito tried to develop the economy by tying Yugoslavia to the world market, the United States and the European Economic Community (EEC). What was achieved, however, by the 1970s, was huge indebtedness to Western banks and a ferocious program of austerity to cover the gaps.

The difference between the developed regions like Slovenia and the underdeveloped South grew. After the worldwide economic crisis of the 1970s, Yugoslavia became more and more unstable. Tito's death and later the revolutions in Eastern Europe brought these contradictions to the surface.

Why are the ethnic antagonisms so strong?

National oppression in the region has a long history, tied up with imperialist interventions. Before the First World War, the Austrians were the ones who occupied and oppressed Slovenia and Croatia, while at the same time stirring up their differences with the Serbs. The Ottoman dictatorship, even though it was in decline, maintained its rule over the greater part of the Balkans thanks to the support of England and France, who feared Russian influence in the region.

After the Balkan Wars and the First World War, it was France, England and the U.S. which allowed Serbia to rule over Yugoslavia and to oppress, in the most barbarous way, the ethnic minorities. Throughout the inter-World War period, Yugoslavia was synonymous with ethnic oppression.

During the Second World War, Germans and Italians divided up the region by supporting a status quo based on ethnic repression. The Nazis supported the fascist *Ustashi* in Croatia, which slaughtered the Serbian minority.

Tito and the Stalinist CP seemed to provide a way out of all this. Indeed, in the early post-war period, ethnic differences seemed to be more subdued.

Isn't it better to maintain a united Yugoslavia than continue with the bloodshed of civil war?

The Yugoslav state is not a solution because it is exactly the one that created the problem. Tito's "market socialism" is what created the fantastic differences in the country: a developed North (Slovenia) and an underdeveloped South (cheap labor, raw materials).

Tito's police state (and his former glory as a partisan) for years covered up the contradictions. But the 1970s economic crisis gave way to the 1980s, which saw the workers unite in resistance, with strikes and struggles for trade union and political freedoms.

The ruling class answer was nationalism.

In Serbia, Milošević became leader of the Communist Party and proceeded to transform the state machine of Yugoslavia into the vassal of Serbia. He abolished the autonomy of Kosovo (90 percent Albanians, the poorest and most oppressed in Yugoslavia).

Milošević recognized that Yugoslavia would not continue to be united. He wanted to create a Greater Serbia by tacking on parts of Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. The leaders of other republics responded by asserting their own nationalism. In Slovenia, the CP leaders joined up with liberals to declare their independence. In Croatia, former party boss Franjo Tudjman turned to Croatian nationalism.

Must we support Croatian nationalists?

Tudjman refused to condemn the slaughter of Serbs by Croatian fascists during the Second World War. Croatia retains the fascist *Ustashi* flag. In Croatia today, the police are waging a pogrom against Serbs.

Tudjman's aims are the same as those of Milošević—to turn the attention of workers away from economic problems and to create a Greater Croatia.

Can the EEC offer a way out?

People in the West have been shocked by the extent of the crisis in Yugoslavia. Italy, Austria, and Greece share borders with Yugoslavia. Each has its own claims on the area. Bulgaria and Albania also have land claims on Yugoslavia.

Even if such land claims do not express themselves through war, the West is afraid of the effect that the Yugoslav crisis may have on other national disputes (Hungary-Rumania; Czechs-Slovaks; within the former Soviet Union, between the center and the republics).

In spite of the intensity of the crisis, the West Europeans are split because they have conflicting interests. Germany wants the EEC to play a more energetic role (even militarily). It wants Slovenia and Croatia to be recognized, because it believes these two mini-states would fall within its "sphere of influence." Greece and Italy intervene to prevent "German penetration." But even these two countries have conflicting interests—Italy believes that it can come out as the beneficiary if Slovenia becomes independent, whereas Greece wants to see Yugoslavia united under Milošević.

Whoever steps in—EEC, U.S., Commonwealth of Independent States—the result will be against the Yugoslavian people. Every intervention will be in the interest of the power that intervenes. It will sharpen ethnic antagonisms. The causes for the war and the economic catastrophe will continue.

What should be the position of the left?

First, struggle against any Western intervention in Yugoslavia. Such interventions for decades have had the result of fostering nationalism, oppression and war.

Second, every Yugoslav republic has the right to self-determination, including the right to split away.

A united Yugoslavian state under today's conditions can only mean oppression of all the republics by a "federal" army dominated by Serbia. Supporting the right to self-determination does not mean that we support Tudjman in Croatia, but by denying

that right, the only thing we achieve is to strengthen the hand of nationalists like Milošević and Tudjman.

Supporting the right to self-determination provides the possibility for revolutionary socialists to unmask the nationalist leaders, to show that they want to distract people's attention from the real causes of the disaster—economic crisis and the oppression of the working class.

It provides the opportunity to recall the joint struggles of workers of the various ethnic groups during the 1987-88 period, which opened the way for a working-class solution to the crisis in Yugoslavia.

This article was first published in *Worker Solidarity 58,* September 1991.

National or Class Strategy?

BEFORE THE noise dies down from the meeting of Mitsotakis and Yilaz in Paris, the diplomacy of New Democracy has put forward the next "peaceful" initiative: Mitsotakis, Milošević, Popov and Roman sit down together in Athens to bring stability to the Balkans.

What hypocrisy! All the vultures of the Balkans gather around the butcher of Yugoslavia, the one who has brought slaughter between Serbs and Croats. They look to see what they can pick from the bones of Yugoslavia and pose as innocent doves.

Even so, while the greedy purposes of this secret top-level diplomacy can only with difficulty be hidden behind fancy words about peace, government propaganda insists that Mitsotakis is looking after the "common national interest" of us all.

In the Aegean, New Democracy is looking after "our oil." In Macedonia, it takes care of "our history"!!! In Thrace, it supports "our religion" and in Cyprus, "our rights." This "we" and "our" is especially provocative coming from such an openly capitalist class-oriented government.

What sort of common interest exists between Latsis or Vardinoyiannis, who is waiting for the green light for drilling in the Aegean. . . and the thousands of demonstrators last winter who shouted that they would not fight for oil in the Persian Gulf?

What common interest is there between the "great benefactor of the patriarchate" Angelopoulos, who spends millions on the baptism of his grandson. . . and the worker of Xanthi who must slip into unemployment because Mitsotakis has closed his or her factory?

How do they dare to say "us," those in Cyprus who leave the president of the Sampson coup-free, those who want an amnesty for junta figures, even those in Patra who cuddle up to the murderers of Temponera?

In the face of such grotesque hypocrisy, an opposition which speaks in the name of the workers ought to have no difficulty unmasking it. But PASOK, and behind it SYN and the KKE, prefer to criticize Mitsotakis from the right; exactly the same criticism which New Democracy made of Papandreou when he met Turkish president Ozal at Davos. The mistake of the government, they say, is that its diplomacy is ill-prepared, amateurish and wrong-footed because it has no national strategy.

Nationalism is a Dead End

What does this kind of criticism mean concretely? It means that the opposition accepts the interests and demands of Greek capitalists as being the common interests of workers too. It accepts class collaboration and builds bridges to the right while at the same time asking the working class to make sacrifices that require an even harder war effort.

So that, at the moment when Mitsotakis is concentrating army forces in Macedonia, the moment when soldiers and their families are upset because they are being moved to another hot spot, from PASOK we hear the voice of the MP Vounatsos who condemns it all because it "weakens defense of the Greek islands." Instead of condemning the risk of embroiling Greece in the war that is raging in Yugoslavia, PASOK

wants a bigger army to guard two fronts, North and East!

The criticism of Mitsotakis that he does not strike a hard enough bargain with Ankara or Skopje is one that appeals to tin-Hitlers and despots from Kantiotis in Florina, to Damaskinos in Komotini, and to Hrysostomos in Cyprus.

Just how far this leads to reconciliation with New Democracy can be seen tangibly in a letter sent by 18 cadres of PASOK (Sylvia Akrita, Haralampidis, Vounatsos and so on) calling for a special discussion of the central committee. After lots of anti-Turk fist-shaking, the letter ends in a call to the cadre of New Democracy in Thrace and the islands to a common "front for national defense." Similarly we see Papathemelis working hand-in-glove with the veteran of anti-Skopje hysteria from the time of ERE, Nicolas Martis![1]

The struggle against the right wing is totally incompatible with nationalism. No matter how Papandreou may shout at Mitsotakis, his national policy is a bridge for working together with New Democracy. This is clear from the statements of Damanakis who makes the same criticism of PASOK about the lack of a national strategy and offers as a solution, a joint conference of all parties to work through the positions and the handling of the foreign ministry.

Rizospastis calls for the same thing: "What is really needed is the development of a strategy which will be followed undeviatingly, regardless of who is in power." (*Balkans At the Crossroads of Developments,* September 8, 1991)

The party that condemns the two-party system as a game which perpetuates the right, no matter who is in government, has arrived, by following the path of "national strategy," at accepting precisely the same fraud.

In the current situation of crisis, instability and sharpening of antagonisms, holding the working class to a common national strategy with the capitalists points it directly to catastrophe. The living example is right next door, Yugoslavia. From the moment that the workers of Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana put aside the struggle against their own ruling classes and instead entered the road of Serbian and Croatian nationalism, each lining up behind its "own" national leader, the only thing that was guaranteed was the horror of war.

Workers' Internationalism

Milošević's new chum, Mitsotakis, is taking us in this direction with his initiatives. Milošević's old chum, Papandreou, is pressing for us to run even faster. The working class has every interest in stopping this downward slide. But how?

What we need is a class strategy, a strategy of workers' internationalism, a policy which begins with the idea that the workers of all countries are brothers and sisters, they have nothing to be divided about, and because of this, they are the only force that can build friendship and trust between peoples, a just and lasting peace. The working class is the force that can root out the antagonisms, expropriate the capitalists and put to an end their endless disputes over the division and re-division of the means of production. Only through workers' revolution can we be finally freed from the threat of war.

That is why our criterion on international questions is the unity of the working class. This means:

■ No illusions about peace conferences organized by the big powers—whether it be over the Middle East, Yugoslavia or Cyprus. The U.S., CIS, EEC, with or without the camouflage of the United Nations, are not interested in "resolving disputes." They merely put forward their own imperialist interests, passing rapidly from "peaceful intervention" to military action, as George Bush did in the Persian Gulf.

■ The right of self determination for all the peoples of the region. Declarations about the "inviolability of borders" are reactionary. How can the Palestinians or the Kurds acquire a homeland today without changing borders? We do not however support this right selectively and hypocritically. The same right applies to the Slovenes, the Croats, the Albanians of Kosovo, the Macedonians who voted by a landslide majority at the recent referendum in Skopje, and the Turkish Cypriots. The working class has nothing to gain from a "solution" to the Cyprus problem which will force the Turkish Cypriots to belong to the same state as the Greek Cypriots, if they do not want this themselves.

■ No to racism and the oppression of minorities. Mitsotakis cannot brag that he is the "protector" of the Greeks of Albania and at the same time condemn Ozal when he says he is the protector of the Turks in Thrace. The way to avoid playing these games over the backs of the minorities is not by pressuring them to become Greek (by denying the Macedonians their language, or even through pogroms in Xanthi and Komotini), but by struggle to defend their rights.

■ Struggle against the government of austerity and warmongering. Unemployment, privatization and cuts are tied to military spending and to the high costs of participating in imperialist campaigns. We demand cuts to frigates and warplanes and not to wages, hospitals, transportation and schools. Every strike, every workers' struggle in this direction not only protects our bread and our jobs, it also sends a message to all the workers in the countries around us. If workers' struggles toss out Mitsotakis, this will be the best help for the working class of Turkey which is just beginning to emerge from its straight-jacket. It will give a new incentive to the workers of Yugoslavia to escape from the nightmare of civil war.

We must put all our strength into this perspective.

This article was first published in *Worker Solidarity 59,* September 1991.

1. Nicolas Martis is a co-accuser of the five OSE members who have been charged with treason for authoring and distributing this pamphlet.

No to Chauvinism!

THE ORCHESTRATED attack against Aleka Papariga, a spokesperson of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), because she spoke of Slav speakers in Macedonia is an obscene outburst of chauvinist hysteria.

With Varvitsiotis and Brakos leading the charge in parliament, a whole horde of New Democracy and far-right hooligans swung into action with lawsuits and fascist blockades to stop her tour of Salonika. With the help of press and television, this obscenity was depicted as "an outcry against the unpatriotic sellout views of the KKE," trying to develop a lynch mob mentality to terrify and gag every voice which might be raised against the warmongering plans of the chauvinists.

New Democracy = Chauvinism + Warmongering

Just who contrived this whole effort can best be seen from the way it quieted down again, when Mitsotakis appeared in the role of the leader who is supposedly above it all, calling for cool-headedness, admitting: "all of us talk of Slav speakers."

This is the very height of hypocrisy!

The New Democracy government wishes to appear as the magnanimous accuser who will *forgive* Papariga for her "slip of the tongue," even though it should itself be in the dock, condemned for its criminal policy at the expense of the Macedonians and the working class.

At a time when the United Nations is picking up new members every day, when governments around the planet are obliged to recognize the right of nations to self-determination, from the Baltic States to Slovenia and Croatia, from the Ukraine to the heart of Asia, the New Democracy government persists with a policy that denies the existence of an entire people and tries to erase that people from the map.

The policy which declares: "there is no Macedonian nation," "there is no Macedonian language," "there is no Macedonian state" is similar to that of Turkish generals in regard to the Kurds. In exactly the same way that Turkish chauvinism denies the existence of the Kurds and calls them "mountain dwelling Turks," reaching as far as slaughtering and bombing Kurdish areas of Iraq, Greek chauvinism is headed in the same direction when it denies the existence of the Macedonians. We do not need to wait for the moment when the Greek air force bombs Skopje before we begin to resist this kind of politics.

But They Do Exist!

The Republic of Macedonia is not a contrivance of Tito, as chauvinist propaganda would have it.

The Macedonians have decades of struggle behind them: against the Ottoman dictatorship (the uprising at Ilinden against the Sultan's army), then in turn against the victors of the Balkan Wars who divided Macedonia up. All of these victors denied the existence of a Macedonian ethnicity along with other ethnic groups in the area. The movement of Macedonians against the Sultan did not demand an ethnically pure independent Macedonia. It demanded a place for the Macedonians in a Balkan Federation freed from the yoke of the Ottomans, alongside Greeks, Serbs and Jews. The Federation of Salonika, the biggest socialist organization of the Greek proletariat before the formation of SEKE (Socialist Workers' Party of Greece) and the KKE,[1] supported the Macedonians' movement. In 1908, the Macedonian socialist Vlakhov was elected to parliament. He was later to become the first president of the Republic of Macedonia, with its capital at Skopje within the Yugoslav federation.

Between the wars, reactionary governments of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria asserted that the Macedonians were southern Serbs on the one hand, and Bulgarians on the other. Greek governments agreed with either description, according to the needs of diplomacy at any given moment. Only for a brief time in 1925 did Greek diplomacy accept that there was a separate Macedonian language, and the Ministry of Education printed a primary school reader so that the children of Macedonians in Greek Macedonian villages could learn to read. This was an enlightened moment, the exception to the rule of brutal prohibition of the Macedonian language which reached criminal proportions in the era of Metaxas.

But the Macedonians are not Serbs nor Bulgarians, and they proved this stunningly during the period of the resistance to fascist occupation in the Second World War. The guerrillas in Skopje fought the Bulgarian fascists regardless of the fact that they used propaganda about the "national rights" of Macedonians in a Greater Bulgaria. *Macedonian guerrillas only turned towards Tito when he renounced the theory of "southern Serbs" and promised to create a mini-state within the Yugoslav federation, officially equal with the other republics.*

From the Civil War to the New Anti-Macedonian Campaign

In Greece, the guerrilla war was defeated and the army of Papagos and Truman massacred thousands of Macedonian fighters along with fighters of the Republican Army. Whatever the U.S. State Department may say today about the "human rights of minorities," American imperialism at that time applied the Truman doctrine with the help of the Greek government over the bodies of the Greek workers' movement and the Macedonian minority. By force of arms, bourgeois governments imposed silence on the question and imposed the notion of their non-existence. When Tito turned towards the West, this led to 35 years (with a few exceptions) of silence, while the governments in Athens and Belgrade agreed to ignore the existence of a Republic of Macedonia in their dealings with each other.

But precisely because the Macedonians are not an "artificial contrivance of Tito," when the Titoist status quo went into crisis in Yugoslavia, one of the ethnic groups that entered the stage again was the Macedonians. As in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana, so also in Skopje—former figures of the status quo which was falling apart discovered that the only way to regain popularity was by wearing the national colors of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia. Macedonian national consciousness turned out to be as existent as any other in Yugoslavia.

This fact has provoked hysteria in the chauvinist circles of Greece.

The New Democracy government tried and continues to try through constant maneuvers and pressures to maintain the preposterous dogma of a "non-existent" Macedonian nation. It tries to convince the EEC and the United States to give the green light to the elimination of the word Macedonia, and to have it absorbed into smaller Yugoslavia or the "Greater Serbia" of Milošević. It will tolerate the republic on condition of a change of name, but this proposal means the Greek government has the

right of veto over the government in Skopje, and the republic will really have the status of a protectorate. Recently, there even have been cries for the Greek army to take part in carving up Macedonia between Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece.

No to Unanimity With New Democracy

In order to bolster these paranoid plans, New Democracy has raised the battle-readiness of the army. It has spent millions to dispatch units to the Yugoslav border, it has added further burdens of military service onto the backs of young people, and it fans the flames of patriotic fervor so as to politically isolate any resistance. Even fascist groups of "outraged citizens" have been recruited to this campaign. This was easily seen when they appeared at the court for the trial of six members of OAKKE accused of putting up provocative posters.[2] It was also shown by what happened to Aleka Papariga in Salonika.

No worker, no young person should have any doubt about what the patriotic incendiarism of New Democracy really means.

And yet the leadership of PASOK also intends to play with fire. It has portrayed the New Democracy policy as "wimpy" and offers as its key representative Papathemelis, who surpasses even New Democracy for hysteria on the issue. PASOK, which once offered itself as the party of peace in the Balkans—as the party which put an end to the craziness of the "belligerent situation" with Albania and had to face fascist shouts of "Papoulia, traitor, Albanian!"—now allows its cadres in Salonika to add their voices to those of the New Democrats and the fascists, against Papariga because she dared to speak of Slav speakers in the villages of Macedonia.

Unionists within PASKE and PASP[3] must openly renounce cooperation with New Democracy. Nationalism is a bridge for cozying up to the right. It is a weapon which paralyzes the workers' movement and will allow the government to escape the isolation it feels from a people outraged by its austerity policies.

These policies and warmongering chauvinism are just two sides of the same coin. They are the result of the efforts of the government to serve the interests of capitalists within and beyond their borders. Anyone who wants to defend workers' interests against the austerity policy must also join the struggle against nationalism.

The Working Class Answer is Internationalism

In this regard, the declarations of Papariga are a positive step because they begin to open up such a battlefront. But they remain in the middle of the road. In her opening remarks, the Secretary of the KKE said:

> If we wish to raise up a barrier to war and nationalism, we must choose another road than seeking new grandeur or worrying about ancient ancestors. We must choose the road of attracting the people to us, the road of friendship and joint action and reaction to every form of expansionism. Any Greek citizen, when there is any insult or put down at the expense of the Muslim minority, of the Slav speakers who live in certain parts of Northern Greece, or of foreign workers or political refugees . . . must turn her/his back on national egoism and chauvinism, and react collectively.

Under the pressure of the chauvinist attack, the leadership of the KKE accepted the intervention of Mitsotakis claiming that Papariga had been misquoted. The emphasis was placed elsewhere—that the KKE does not recognize ethnic minorities, that

in Thrace there is a religious minority and in Macedonia there are some "citizens who have the same linguistic peculiarity," that finally "the problem is that we have to deal with Skopje, which has a big protector. It has others, but chiefly the United States." So declarations that set out to condemn chauvinism and support Slav speakers end up back in the confines of unanimity against Skopje.

Why the retreat? Why is the KKE unable to hold the anti-chauvinist line? There are two main weaknesses in the view of the KKE.

The first weakness springs from the fact that the KKE continues to see the solution in terms of a united Yugoslavia. Illusions about the supposedly socialist character of its status quo, now collapsing, lead the KKE to positions that rehash the past, not just in Yugoslavia but also elsewhere. But especially in Yugoslavia, this position means supporting the efforts of Milošević to keep other republics under the control of Belgrade—precisely what Mitsotakis and Samaras want, at least in regard to Macedonia.

The second and more basic weakness however is that "genuine patriotism is incompatible with nationalism, chauvinism and dreams of greatness." (*Positions of the KKE on the Balkans,* p. 30.1)

This illusion is even worse. Patriotism is not only compatible with chauvinism, it is the breeding ground of chauvinism. *A party which accepts that there are shared national interests between workers and capitalists and indeed that workers must behave patriotically by raising those "common" interests above their own class interests, leaves the working class undefended.*

Only an internationalist party, which, without any hesitation, puts forward the interests of the working class, above the borders of diplomatic machinations—only this kind of party can counter the poison of chauvinism.

Nowadays the need for just such an internationalist workers' party is becoming painfully apparent to every militant who tries to fight the vile chauvinist and anti-communist attacks of New Democracy.

This article was first published in *Worker Solidarity 68,* February 1992.

1. SEKE (Socialist Workers' Party of Greece) was founded in 1918. At its third extraordinary conference in 1924, it changed its name to the KKE (Communist Party of Greece).
2. OAKKE members had put up posters calling for support for Slav-Macedonians.
3. PASKE and PASP are trade union federations within the orbit of PASOK.

The Campaign to Defend Greek Socialists

THE EFFORT to defend the authors and sellers of this pamphlet from prosecution on treason charges has attracked impressive support in Greece and internationally. The following is a partial listing of individuals and organizations which have joined the call to drop all charges against the five Greek socialists.

GREECE

Executive Committee, **General Confederation of Workers in Greece**
Demetris Desyllas, MEP, New Left Current*
Katerina Iatropoulous, MP, Alternative Ecological Foundation*
Stratis Korakas, MP, Communist Party*
Yannis Panagopoulous, Executive Committee, Bank Workers Union*
Theofilos Sakalides, Executive Committee, Teachers Union*
Sotiris Siokos, Trade Unions' Peace Movement in Greece*
Maria Styllou, Organization for Socialist Revolution
Gregoris Yannarous, MP, Coalition of the Left and Progress*

ENGLAND

Fire Brigades Union
National Association of Colliery Ovenman, Deputies and Shotfirers
Lambeth Trades Council
Tony Benn, MP, Labour Party*
Robin Blackburn, Editor, *New Left Review**
Prof. Alex Callinicos, York University*
Jeremy Corbyn, MP, Labour Party*
Paul Foot, Journalist, *Daily Mirror**
George Galloway, MP, Labour Party*
Lindsey German, Editor, *Socialist Review*
Bernie Grant, MP, Labour Party*
Prof. Fred Halliday, London School of Economics*
Chris Harman, Editor, *Socialist Worker*
Ralph Miliband, Editor, *Socialist Register**
John Palmer, Europe Editor, *The Guardian**
John Rees, Editor, *International Socialism*

UNITED STATES

Pete Camarata, Co-chair, Teamsters for a Democratic Union*
Prof. Noam Chomsky, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*
Prof. Samuel Farber, Brooklyn College*
David Finkel, *Against the Current**
Phyllis and Julius Jacobson, Co-editors, *New Politics**
Prof. George Katsiaficas, Wentworth Institute of Technology*
Erwin Knoll, Editor, *The Progressive**
Joanne Landy, Campaign for Peace and Democracy*
Harry Magdoff, Editor, *Monthly Review**
Kim Moody, *Labor Notes**
Prof. James Petras, State University of New York at Binghamton*
Ahmed Shawki, Editor, *Socialist Worker*
Paul Sweezy, Editor, *Monthly Review**
Jerry Tucker, Movement for New Directions, United Auto Workers*

CANADA

John Baglow, Vice President, Ontario Federation of Labor*
Prof. Abigail Bakan, Queen's University*
Deborah Bourque, Nat. Vice President, Canadian Union of Postal Workers*
Prof. Gordon Lefebvre, Université du Quebec à Montréal*
Prof. Colin Leys, Queen's University*
Prof. David McNally, York University*
Prof. François Moreau, Université d'Ottawa*
Leo Panitch, Editor, *Socialist Register**
Prof. Daiva Stasiulis, Carleton University*
Prof. Elaine Stavro-Pearce, Trent University*
Prof. Mariana Valverde, York University*

* For identification purposes only

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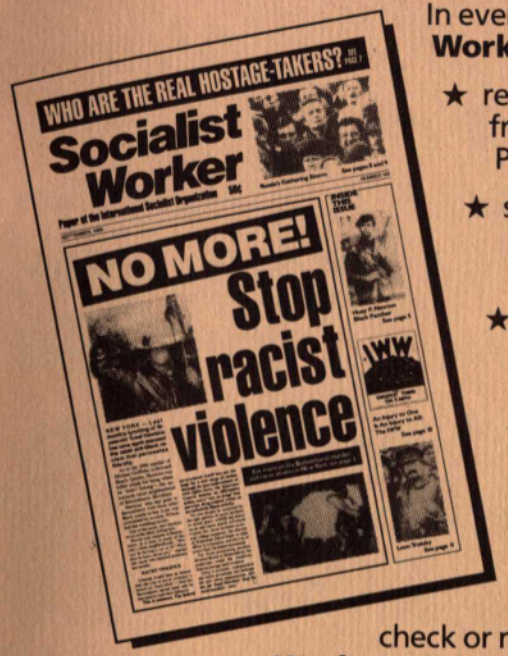

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